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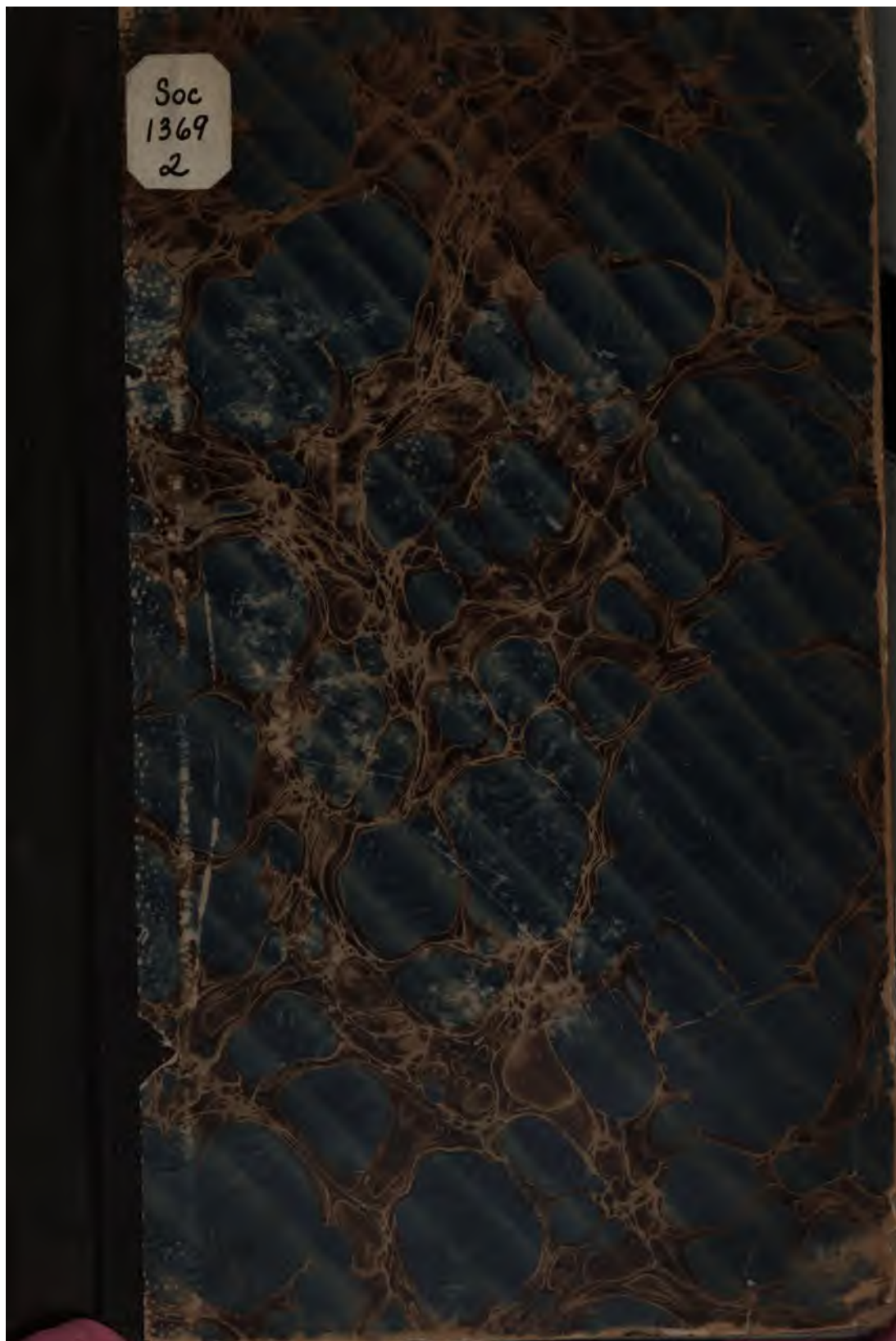
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HARD TIMES
—AND—
**WHAT TO LEARN
FROM THEM.**

A PLAIN TALK WITH THE WORKING PEOPLE

By PROF. ROBT. ELLIS THOMPSON,

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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HARD TIMES are the times to think. When people are well off and at their ease, they get on without much thought. But when they are in trouble or in want, their minds go to work. The pain that even a child goes through in cutting its teeth, seems to have a good deal to do with the growth of its wits. It is smarter and brighter after every new tooth. And even grown people are thought to know more than they did, after they have cut their eye-teeth. Shakespeare shows his great knowledge of human nature by putting his grandest thoughts into the mouths of men who are aroused and excited by danger or distress.

If we come out of these Hard Times without having learnt anything, it must be because we are the sort of fools it is of no use to send to school. And when a people or nation are found to be unteachable, they are very soon wiped out to make room for something better.

Worse still than the failure to learn anything good from the Hard Times, would it be to learn only what is bad from them. They may teach us nothing but hatred and distrust of each other. They may cause different classes to dislike one another more heartily than ever. And, instead of working together more quietly and peaceably for the future, we may come to work against each other, and to stand each in the other's way. That is one of our great dangers in this second half of the nineteenth century—the danger of sinking into a nasty, brutish, wolfish state, in which every man's hand is against his neighbor.

Now it is true that all classes of society are exposed to this danger, but none are so much so as the working people, that is, the people who have manual labor and skill to sell, but nothing else. For this bad lesson is what they are taught by nearly all those who put themselves forward as their friends and their champions, their guides and their teachers. These men declare that all the blame of the suffering and distress falls on the rest of society, while the workingman is blameless. They find nothing in his conduct which calls for amendment, except, perhaps, that he has been too submissive to his oppressors. They say that the right attitude for the working classes is that of conflict, resistance and enmity to their employers and to all the rest of mankind who do not take their part against those employers.

Now there is that in every man, that baser self, which loves a pleasant lie more than a bitter truth, and likes to be told that "the rest of the world is to blame when things go wrong, but I and my class are altogether in the right." Rich men like to be told that as well as poor men; they run after false teachers who say that, just as the poor do. But in every man, be he rich or poor, there is also a something, a better self, which desires to know the truth, and to be blamed when blame is deserved. And the pity is that nearly all of those who are regarded as the workingman's friends and teachers, are men who speak to the baser and not to the better self in those who listen to them. And indeed they have no choice but to do so. They live by exciting strife and contention, which our baser self delights in. The peace and good-will which our better self loves, would take the bread out of their mouths. They must say, like Milton's Satan:

"Evil, be thou my good."

for what is good would be their destruction.

For this very reason, it can be hardly be wise for the workingman to follow these guides, since their interests, to

say the least, *may* be utterly different from his own. No sensible business man would employ a lawyer, who was continually urging and exciting him to quarrels and law suits. A lawyer who lived by such practices would be liable to punishment as "a common barrator," for the law requires him to think first of the interests of his client, and to desire the peace and harmony which will promote those interests. But what else than "common barrators" are these wordy champions of the workingman's rights? The only difference is that they go to work on a larger scale than do the rogues of the legal profession. The bad lawyer, for the sake of his fees, persuades a few individuals to "take the law" of their neighbors, and he of course opposes any compromise or understanding which would put an end to the lawsuit, and, with it, to his fees. The Labor Reformer arouses evil passions in large masses of men, and brings them into conflict with others, in order that he may live in idleness, and in the intoxication of continual excitement and gratified vanity. It is but natural in him to resist every approach to harmony, and to heap abuse upon those who advise milder and more peaceable measures. He lives by strife, and peace would ruin him. Unless, therefore, it is self-evident and beyond all doubt that the workman should be forever at war with his employer, it must be the height of folly for him to take counsel only or chiefly with those whose only interest is war. Let us suppose that it is proposed that the United States shall go to war with Spain, for the liberation and annexation of Cuba. What would be thought of a proposition to leave that question to a convention made up of all the inventors of torpedoes, revolving cannon, breach-loading rifles, and other instruments of slaughter, which have been forwarded to the Patent Office and are urged upon the attention of the War Department? It would be said at once, if we are to fight Spain, it must be after taking the advice of those who have no private interests to promote by the war.

Some of these men have doubtless taken to this bad trade from good motives, and do honestly believe the things they say. They are mostly persons who have been embittered and even maddened by misfortunes and failures of their own. They have long ceased to regard these questions with a sound mind and without prejudice. This is the best sort. Others are persons who have made the discovery, in some debating society or public meeting, that they could talk, and they have taken to talk as a trade. And as the business of Labor Reformer requires less preparation than any other that gives an opening for speech-making, they have taken to it as the easiest. They are become "champions of the workingman," chiefly because they think themselves too good to work as he does at an honest trade. They have no convictions deeper than their teeth ; but they have caught up all the old phrases, and can talk about "the horny-handed sons of toil," although it would tax their memories to say when they did an honest day's work.

And if the working man could see some of these champions when are they off duty, he would find them lounging about the lobbies of our Legislatures, making bargains with those who need their influence, or perhaps drinking and smoking in the rooms of expensive clubs, or driving harlots behind blood horses "on the Avenue." These are men who eat the bread of idleness, and deny themselves nothing. They make speeches about the privations of the poor, while they live more sumptuously than the rich. The respect shown them by the laboring classes is their stock in trade, and the agitations of the labor market supply the wind to grind their private grist. For news comes that the bung-hole makers of Bungville are "out," and Mr. Labor Reformer is off to the place by the next train, but so changed that the very door-keeper of his club would no longer know him. His broad-cloth, his diamonds, his kid gloves, are gone, and he

now wears an old suit, with one leg of his trousers stuck into his unblackened boot, while his necktie and his hair are in a fine disorder, and his hands have stains which look like those of work. He is now every inch "the champion of the poor man." And this is no fancy picture.

Of course the Hard Times give such men plenty to talk about. They prosper by the unhappiness of their fellow men, while nothing is so fatal to them as general prosperity. But they do not tell the whole truth. They take great pains to keep the minds of those who listen to them fixed upon one side of the case, while they leave the other altogether out of sight. They say little of what employers have suffered, and nothing of the cases in which employers have made sacrifices and kept their works running at a loss, in order that their men may still get a living. They do not speak of the dividends "passed" by the great companies, and of the straits to which many families have been reduced because of this. They do not dwell on the general reduction of expenses, the luxuries given up, and the plainer style of living adopted. Nor do they mention employers reduced to utter poverty, and now glad to earn a living as salesmen or accountants. No! they can see one thing, and only one—the distress of the working classes. And they speak of that as if no one else had any feeling for it, whereas for sixty years back the condition of those classes, and the means of improving it without making the laborer a pauper or a dependent, has been constantly in the thoughts of all thinking people in Europe and America.

The hardships borne by a large part of the working classes are bitter enough, God knows. Men are walking the streets of our great cities, morning, noon and night, week after week, asking nothing but a chance to earn something, and asking in vain. Little mouths at home will have the less to eat, because no work is found. Perhaps the house, or the good rooms, in which family decency and privacy were

possible, will have to be given up, and they will be forced to huddle together in some narrow and filthy corner of a tenement house. Such a "come down" in life touches a man of self-respect and independence to the quick. Still more does it hurt him to throw himself and his family on the charity of others. Not more keenly did the great Italian poet in his exile feel "the bitterness of climbing another's stairs and eating another's bread" than does the right minded workman feel the humiliation of taking as a gift what he would gladly earn by honest work. It is not so much the actual suffering by hunger, for in a country like this no one need want for food if he will ask for it. It is the suffering of mind and spirit that a man goes through in asking, and in letting strangers feed or clothe those for whom he would willingly work his fingers to the bone.

All the meaner is it for selfish traders in talk to tell such men lies which deepen their misery by adding the sourness of discontent to the bitterness of want. Nor are these lies a whit the better for being made up in the main of half truths, that is of separate facts, each true enough in itself, but turned into a lie by being sundered from other facts. For everybody knows:

"That a lie which is half a truth, is ever the blackest of lies;
For a lie which is all a lie, may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth, is a harder matter to fight."

Whatever it is that has caused the Hard Times, it is certain that nobody has shown or can show that the employers of labor are the persons to blame for them. If it were known that the mischief was made by anything they had done or left undone, they would not need much persuasion to remedy it. For nobody has more urgent need to see the times grow better than they have.

It may be said: "These Labor Reformers are perhaps not good and unselfish men, but they have the right of the

matter. We believe in equal rights. It is not right that the few should have plenty, while the many are in want or in danger of it. It is not right that the profits of an establishment should go chiefly to those who hardly do a hand's turn of work, while those who sweat and swelter get but a trifle. It is not right that men who are willing to work should be dependent upon others for leave to work. There may be a remedy for this, or there may be none. But one thing is certain, we cannot like it, and it is of no use to try to talk us into liking it."

We all believe in equal rights. But equality of condition is a different thing. To make people equal in everything, it would be necessary for all those who can see to have their eyes put out, so that they might be on equal terms with the blind.

And how does this inequality in the distribution of wealth arise? It is not that the State has passed any law to effect an unequal division. If there were such a law, we might repeal it, and so end the dispute. It is not that those who were here first, got all the good things of the country and kept them to themselves, so that the new comers have nothing. Some of our richest men came to this country very poor, and afterwards acquired large estates. Such were Girard, the first of the Astors, A. T. Stewart, and many others. Nor is it a matter of "luck." In a very few cases, great fortunes have been got by something turning up which was quite unforeseen and unexpected; and these cases are so much talked about in the newspapers that every fool begins to dream of such a chance for himself. But such cases are as rare as two-headed calves. They occur so seldom that they are not worth taking into account. Neither is it true that the wealth of the richer classes has been got by dishonest or sharp practices. By such means, a small part of that wealth is sometimes transferred from one rich man to another. But that applies to the very

smallest part of it, and has little or nothing to do with the relations of employers to their workingmen. And fortunes made in that way never last. As the proverb says: "*What comes over the Devil's back, goes under his belly.*"

In the beginnings of society, all men were equal in being equally poor. Some are now richer than others, because their fathers, or themselves, saved a part of their incomes, while others spent all they got. Capital is the result of that saving. It is the earnings of past labor employed in the purchase of present labor. Most men spend a hundred cents out of every dollar. If all did so, and had always done so, we should now have equality of condition, that is equality in poverty. But some save ten, twenty-five or even fifty cents out of the dollar, by pinching themselves for the present in order that they may be better off in the future. That is how the rich man made his start; of course, as he worked his way up and began to profit by what he had saved, farther saving became easier to him. Unless he changed his style of living to keep pace with his income, the amount he spent out of every dollar grew less and less as he grew richer. And if, besides thrift, he possessed other business gifts, he would turn his dollars to the best account by watching the markets, by making improvements in his factory, or the like. But the time which decided whether he was to become a rich man or remain a poor one, was when he was making a beginning. As Astor used to say: "It's all in saving your first thousand dollars." For in all his later accumulations of wealth, the capitalist simply acted on the rules he had learned and the habits he had formed while he was getting his first thousand.

Wealth is, therefore, nothing but the sign of a power, a habit, a capacity, in the class which has it. This capacity to get money and to keep it, is, as a rule, passed on from father to son, like any other capacity. But it may also be developed

by careful self-training, in a man whose ancestors had none of it, while the rich man's son may lose it by bad training and become a spendthrift. On the whole, those who have the capacity have the wealth. If you were to make "a fresh deal," and distribute equally all the money in America, you would find that in ten years it got back into pretty much the same hands. The number of poor men made permanently rich, and of rich men become poor through the change, would be about the same as in ten years of the present system.

The working classes, therefore, are unwise and unjust in begrudging their employers the capital which they spend in the purchase of labor. The capitalist has just the same right to the money in his cash-box or in his bank account, that the workman has to the wages he carries home on Saturday night. The classes who purchase labor have their faults, like other people. They have not always dealt generously and fairly with the workingman. As late as fifty years ago, they tried, by means of Combination Laws and the like, to hamper the laborer's freedom of action. Such laws were an invasion of equal rights, but they belong to the past. The saddle is now upon the other horse. While nobody now disputes the right of the workingmen to combine for any lawful purpose, and to determine on what terms and for whom they will work, they themselves still deny to each other, and to their employers, that freedom of choice, that right to do what he will with his own, which is every man's by nature. It is they who demand laws to fix the hours of work, and otherwise to limit the range of liberty. It is they who attempt to dictate to those who refuse to accept their terms, and, in some instances, to terrorize those who resist their decrees. They pick up the cast-off errors of the wealthier classes, and display them to the world as the newest and freshest wisdom.

And surely labor is better off in every way, because some have saved while others spent. Would the man who has

nothing but labor to sell be the better off if there were nobody to buy it? Do not our present distresses arise from the destruction of capital, and from the fact that it is no longer worth while to put it into new enterprises, or to spend it in keeping old ones at work? If capital be their enemy, the workmen certainly find it a bewitching enemy. They will follow it to the world's end; they leave the open country, the fresh air and the green fields, and gather into those great centres of population where it furnishes employment. They do so because they know that "it is better to be poor among the rich, than poor among the poor."

There are countries in which the good old times of equality in poverty still continue. Such is the district of Madras in Southern India, where the terrible famine is now raging. It is almost devoid of capital or savings of any sort. It has no large industries. Of its people there are five millions, or one in six, whose whole possessions, including their clothes, would not sell for ten shillings a head in good times, and in a famine year not for a third as much. But we need not go to India for an instance. In reading of the early settlements of Europeans on our own coast, we find that one after another was broken up and ended in complete failure, for want of the bare necessities of life. It was not the Indians who drove them back; it was hunger, cold, nakedness, and the pestilence which walks in the footsteps of the famine. Nothing but the religious zeal of the early Puritan and Quaker colonists enabled them to hold out till a better day dawned. Our Thanksgiving Day is the successor of the "Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer," kept every year by the New England colonies, to implore the mercy of God upon a needy and destitute people. It was changed to what it is, when, after years of thrift and toil, the colonists found themselves in a position to enjoy life themselves, and to offer work and welcome to new comers. America was no Fool's Paradise, where

pigs ran about ready roasted, the streets were paved with two-penny loaves, and the houses thatched with pan-cakes. The ease and comfort of later times were bought by the suffering and distress of first generations of settlers. "Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors."

It may be said: "Capital and Labor are forever at odds, because they cannot help falling out about the division of their joint earnings. The one wants high profits and the other high wages, and you cannot cut the peach so that both shall get the sunny side. Capital holds the purse, and Labor has to stand up for its rights. Peace and harmony may be good for our souls, but strife and conflict are better for our pockets. And the man who shows us when and how to fight to the best advantage, is our best adviser."

This notion that high wages prevent high profits, has not been confined to the working classes. Capitalists have believed it and acted on it. Centuries ago they got laws passed to prevent wages from rising. But they failed to keep them down, and yet were none the poorer for it. For the notion is a mistake.

Of course, wages can never be so high as to leave no profit to the capitalist, or so little profit that it would not be worth his while to take the risk of putting his money into business, instead of lending it on mortgage. Neither can they ever be so low as not to purchase the necessities of life for the workman, for what will not keep life in a man will not induce him to work. But between these two extremes there is a margin, sometimes wider than at others. And the question between Labor and Capital is this: Where, within this margin, shall the line of division between wages and profits fall?

If good wages do not improve the quality of the work done, if they do not induce the workman to take an interest in what he is doing, and to do it well, then of course it is the interest of employers to keep wages down to the lowest point possible. But if, on the contrary, they do have that good effect, then his interest is in the other direction.

It is quite possible to conceive of a class of workmen who have been so filled with discontent, so soured by wrong notions of their rights, that they desire nothing better than the destruction of capital and its owners. Upon such men good wages will have no effect. They will regard their rise with a surly indifference, as the concession of a small part where they ought to have the whole. This seems to be the condition of the working people in those parts of Europe, where they have adopted communistic opinions. But it has never been that of American workmen. Their relations to their employers have been cordial and pleasant, especially in our own City. There have been some exceptions, and of late years those exceptions have been growing in number, with the spread of the opinions and theories held by Labor Reformers and Communists. And if this should go on, then the time may come when our laboring classes, like those of France and parts of Germany, will look upon their employers as robbers and oppressors, and their profits as money stolen from the workingman's earnings. And when that time comes, the employer will find it to his interest to keep wages down to the lowest possible point, for better wages will no longer lead to better work. This is what their new teachers will do for the workingmen.

But, until then, it will pay the employer to give the highest wages he can afford to give. In the long run, he will be the richer for it, not the poorer. All the world over, except in the few places where men's minds are poisoned by false theories, well paid labor is cheaper than ill paid labor, and

every natural rise in wages tends to better the quality of the work. Wherever wages are low, and the people are fed, clothed and housed badly in consequence, work is found to be dear. It pays to take workmen from such countries as England into such countries as Russia, and to give them five or six times as much as the Russian peasant would get. It pays to take English farm hands from the Southern to the Northern shires, where wages are much higher, and where they at once improve as workmen. Once it was common to sneer at Irish laborers, who, on wages of from five pence to a shilling a day, were worth less than Englishmen at half a crown. But since they came to a country where there is, at most times, plenty to do and plenty to pay for it, they have worked as well as anybody.

All the great writers who have looked into this subject, have seen this to be the fact. Adam Smith, who lived just a century ago, says: "The wages of labor are the encouragement of industry, which, like every other human quality, improves in proportion to the encouragement it receives. Where wages are high, we shall always find the workmen more diligent, and more active and expeditious than where they are low."

On the other hand, it is a mistake to suppose that in the division of their joint earnings, capital gets an unreasonably large share. The gross or apparent profits of a manufacture, or the like, are indeed large, but to get at the real or net profits we must deduct (1) interest at market rates on the capital invested, because the capitalist might have got this without risk or trouble, by lending out his money on bonded mortgage; (2) the cost of replacing all the wear and tear of machinery, buildings, live stock or the like, whether this is replaced at once or afterwards; (3) insurance against fire and other disasters; and (4) national, state and local taxes. After these deductions, there is generally left but a small percent-

age to pay the owner (1) for risking the loss of his capital ; and (2) for the trouble he took and the ability he exercised in managing the establishment. This is how the case stands where the actual manager is the owner of all the capital invested. But if he has to borrow all or a part, he must pay as much more than the ordinary market rates for it, as will cover the risk taken by the lender.

Now suppose that the workingmen were to borrow this capital at the rates on which a capitalist borrows it for such purposes, and were to take the management of the establishment into their own hands, they would find their wages no better for the change. They would have to put the control of their business into the hands of some man or committee, invested with authority to secure subordination, assign tasks, and compel some to take the most irksome work. And this man or committee must possess the business skill, knowledge and promptness to select machinery, buy raw materials, sell manufactured goods, and oversee the work to the best advantage. For these gifts they must receive proportional pay, and as the capital will be under their control and at their mercy, the pay must be such as will free them from the temptation to make off with it. The outcome of the experiment would be the reduction of wages, not their increase.

Under our present arrangements, a larger part, by far, of the income of the community goes to the working class in wages, than to the capitalist class in profits. The small incomes of the country are far vaster in their amount than the larger. The incomes too low to be reached by any income tax far exceed in amount those which are high enough to be taxed. And the incomes which pay a slight tax exceed, though not so greatly, those which pay pretty largely or quite largely.

It may be said: "Surely the present unequal distribution of wealth is not to last forever. Will mankind be forever

divided into rich and poor, wealthy and needy? Will not the progress of the world bring us some day to an equality of condition?"

The present order of the world, which divides men into richer and poorer, buyers of labor and sellers of labor, is likely to last forever. We have left the stage of equality behind us; we can reach it again by going backward, but not by going forward. The ranks of the richer classes will always be open to those who choose to take the trouble necessary to enter them. But only a small number will ever do so, nor is it so greatly to be regretted. It is not desirable that everybody should become rich. The condition of the laboring man is not of itself more undesirable or less happy than that of his rich neighbor. Life is full of compensations, and the opportunities of happiness are about equally distributed among men of all classes. The man who works for his living can, and most likely does, get as much enjoyment out of life as the rich man who is busy, and certainly more than the rich man who is idle. Happiness is far more dependent upon the spirit in which a man does his daily work, and enjoys the commonest blessings, than upon the want or the plenty of money in his pocket. The envy with which the workingman is tempted to look on his employer, is very much like that which we used to feel towards grown-up people, when we were children. We were sure that life would be altogether pleasant, if we only had not to go to school, to learn our lessons, and to do as we were bid. We know better now. And rich people know that the other sort of envy is just as childish, for every position in life has its own annoyances, cares and burdens, and the amount of real enjoyment to be had in any of them depends upon a man's self. In some things they are even at a disadvantage as compared with poorer people. Money and servants put barriers between members of the same household, and often keep them from

showing kindness to one another in little things. Those who have less to spend, live closer to each other in more ways than one. And if they feel towards each other as they ought, they get more enjoyment out of their family life than they would in a big house, with a swarm of servants to keep each of them from needing the rest to do anything for him.

It is well, indeed, that there should be rich people in the world, for we are all the better off for their existence. It is as well that some people believe in the power of money to make them happy. They toil all the harder to become rich, and thus confer a benefit upon the rest of us. But if they could see far enough ahead to know just what wealth can do and what it cannot do, what it brings a man and what it takes away from him, they would probably be in no such haste to give up everything else for the sake of it. Getting happiness by changing our circumstances in life, while we ourselves are still unchanged, is like Paddy's way of lengthening his blanket, by cutting a piece from the top and sewing it on to the bottom.

On the other hand, there is, and always will be, a gradual approximation of the condition of the man who lives by his wages to that of the wealthier classes, *in some respects*. This is seen in comparison of the comforts and conveniences enjoyed by the working classes of our times with those of the poorer or even of the richest classes of two centuries ago. The greater part of the progress made by the world is a common gain for the whole of society. It is like the public road, which could not have been made if all had been poor, but which is open to rich and poor alike. The services, also, which capital renders to labor increase with the growth of society. One of the greatest is the reduction of the price of manufactured goods of every sort, by introducing better methods, finer machinery, a larger scale of operations, and the like. As all the statistics collected in Europe and America go to show,

the wages of labor are steadily rising, while many of the things which the workman has to purchase are growing cheaper, so that the same sum will go farther. A new loom does not pull down the weaver's wages, but it enables him, as well as every other sort of workman, to buy cheaper clothing for his children and himself.

This holds good of all the results of past labor, for every improvement cheapens them to the workman of to-day. If our whole City, for instance, were put up for sale, it would bring not so much as nine years' wages of the 126,400 persons employed in our manufacturing establishments. It took far more labor than that to build the City, but Philadelphia would now sell, not for what it cost, but for what it would now cost to put up another Philadelphia, with all our modern methods and appliances for procuring, transporting and finishing material. The old houses, for instance, in the parts of the City which were first built, are no longer worth what they cost, because new and cheaper ways of moulding bricks, cutting stone, and shaping timbers have been devised since they were put up. The same is true, in a less degree, of newer houses. It is true of the whole State, with its cities, towns, canals, railroads, mines, farms, factories, furnaces and oil wells. It is true of the national domain and of every separate part of it. With every improvement in the methods of work, all that has been done is cheapened, and labor grows in the power to purchase.

But this sort of approach towards equality is not sufficient for some people. They want complete equality and at once, THROUGH BY EXPRESS WITHOUT STOPPAGES. They would get rid of the distinction between the employer and the laborer, either by vesting the management of all industry in the government, or by abolishing property itself and vesting all ownership in the community. The former are the socialists

and the latter the communists, but the line between the two is not very sharply drawn, and most of our socialists seem to be communists at bottom.

It is impossible to believe that we are in any real danger from such theories. No European country has ever been persuaded to adopt them, except on a small scale in France during the Revolution of 1848, and that very much against the will of the nation. It is far less likely that they will ever be tried here, where the owners of property form two thirds of the voting population, and the number is steadily increasing, especially among our city artisans. For a man who owns anything is not likely to become a socialist; he prefers "the bird in hand." A Scotchman who had been very forward in his advocacy of such views, was found, by one of his associates, to have altogether changed his mind on the subject. "Why, Jamie" said his friend, "have you given up the guid cause?" "Oh, aye, Sandy mon, I hae gotten a coo the noo." Property makes men conservative, and, therefore, such theories can only do mischief in this country, in breeding discontent among the few who adopt them. Were it not for this, they would not be worth noticing.

As to socialism, only the most worthless sort of workmen have anything to gain by that experiment. In the national workshops set up in Paris, and in every similar experiment elsewhere, it was found that the lazy, and not the industrious class of workmen fixed the rate at which each man was to work. Nobody thought it worth while to work hard, since those who idled away their time got an equal share of the earnings. They have had exactly the same experience in Russia, since the abolition of serfdom, because they did not at the same time abolish the village system of land holding and tax-paying. The peasant says: "Where is the use of thrift and industry? I will have to pay these drunkards' taxes, and help to support them through the winter, if I harvest more

corn than they. Let us have plenty of brandy and plenty of idleness, like the rest." A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and no socialist community will ever be more thrifty than its worst members are. Therefore, to substitute such a system for the present, would be a sure way to reduce the wages of labor.

Besides, if the state is to assume the control and direction of industry, it must get the capital. To own and to run the *larger establishments* of Philadelphia alone, over two hundred millions will be needed; those of the rest of the country will require fifteen times as much. But where is all this money to come from? Is it to be raised by taxation? Is it to be added to the amount of the national debt? To borrow it from the present owners at the rates paid by those who make such investments, would leave no margin of profit for the increase of wages, after paying for business skill to manage it. It is, indeed, impossible to put these proposals into any practical shape, without seeing their absurdity.

As to communism, all that we have said about the mischievous effects of socialism upon the quantity and quality of the work done, applies here with equal force. As this method can be tested without the help of government, it has been tried again and again. And all experience shows that it must fail, (1) because it does not bring out the working-man's powers, and (2) because the interests of the individual and the family feeling are too strong for it. One type of communism has always succeeded, and one only. It is the communism which *bases itself on religious zeal and gets rid of the family*. Religious zeal is not manufactured or sold anywhere, and therefore cannot be had in any quantity and quality needed. Yet every communistic society falls to pieces, unless its walls are cemented with this sort of mortar. But supposing this first difficulty to be well got over, the second condition must be kept in mind. If the family

relationships be admitted within the community, then this natural unit of society will sooner or later explode the artificial one. The Monks, the Shakers, the Harmonyites have held together because they embraced celibacy; the Oneida Community and its branches have succeeded, thus far, by another method. But none has ever lasted long, which allowed husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, to continue such within its walls. The workman must, therefore, sacrifice to this new experiment, that which fills a larger place in his life than in the lives of most men; perhaps, all that makes his life worth having.

And all these fine new plans are as old as the hills. A sort of communistic socialism was the state from which the human race started on its upward road to freedom, civilization and general welfare. A large part of the race still linger and loiter there, because they have not the individuality, the force of character to free themselves from it. They are in just such a state as were our forefathers, before they worked their way out of the communistic slough. They are wretchedly poor; they have no motive to work hard, and no sort of outlook for better times. They are also the abject slaves of their chiefs and their priests, for property and freedom go together. The man who knows that he may be starved if he disobeys, or even if he thinks for himself, is not likely to have much mind of his own. And with the return to communism, we would revive this state of slavery.

So much for the things which will not do. Workingmen will be the worse, not the better, for being filled with idle discontent at their position, hatred of their employers, or with windy schemes for making the world over again. But there are many things which they can do to help themselves. They would be far better off now, if they had not waited for

the Hard Times to teach them some sharp lessons. And every sort of self-help involves some kind of self-restraint, or the giving up present indulgence for the sake of a more distant benefit.

The first great thing for the workingman is *economy, thrift*. Whether he expects to remain a workingman, or hopes to become his own master and the employer of labor, he should not live up to the limits of his income, at least when wages are good. For whatever be the true reason of Hard Times, they seem likely to recur at intervals. In England, they count on their coming back every eight years. When wages are good, therefore, every wise workman will be putting by something for a rainy day.

It may be said: "Talk is cheap, but it is not easy to see where we can save. To keep a family in decent style on a workingman's wages is not an easy job in the best of times. The wonder is that we have saved so much. Who own the fifteen millions in our Savings Banks, the eighty millions in those of Boston, and the two hundred and eighty in those of New York? Is it not mainly those who earn their living with their hands? And who control our own Building Associations, and pay seven and a half millions a year in dues to them? Who, within twenty years, have invested fifty millions, (or one-tenth of the value of the city's real estate) through these Associations, in homes, besides, some say, as much more that did not go through the Associations? If our City is 'the City of Homes,' with twice as many dwellings as New York, and with forty thousand bath-rooms, have not its working classes done their share to make it such?"

All this is pleasant to remember. The working people of America, and especially those of our own City and the other manufacturing centres, do save money. But not so generally nor so largely as they might. As a rule, they are

better paid than are persons of the same class in Europe, but they have just as little over at the end of the year. And as in Europe, so with us it is the case that the best paid workmen save least. Our Building Associations are numerous and well supported, but only one in five of those who live by wages are members. Of course, each member represents, as a rule, several workers, but even after making allowance for this, we find that not one-half of those who ought to belong to the Associations have anything to do with them.

The words *thrift*, *economy*, are not to be taken in any narrow sense. They do not mean *wise saving* a bit more than they mean *wise spending*. And a very great deal of our thriftlessness is in unwise spending. For one thing, a great deal of money goes for costly articles, where cheap things do even bet ter.

For instance, nearly everybody in America lays out a part of his income in adorning his home. There could be no better use for money than to make home attractive to father and children. It is never good economy to have a sordid, mean looking house, for then every one is glad to get out of it. And nothing is so expensive as the streets. The rent of a sidewalk and a curbstone is something frightful.

But then the money which people spend for this purpose is seldom wisely spent. A very few people know a beautiful from an ugly thing as soon as they look at it, because they have been trained to tell the difference. They know that the ugly thing will come to be an eyesore, however much in the fashion it may have been when bought, and, however much people of uncultivated taste may have liked it at first sight. And they also know that the cost of an article has nothing to do with its value as an ornament. But these things are no more known without learning and thought, than are Arabic and the higher mathematics. And it is because people are not taught better, that heavy, costly, useless ugliness passes for

fine furniture, good carpets and handsome pictures. These things are to be seen in the homes of the working people, as well as in those of people who can better afford to waste their money on them. For this there is no lasting and thorough cure, until all classes are better educated. But there are some safe rules. Do not buy a thing of this sort because it is in fashion, or because it is costly, or because Mrs. X., or anybody else in the alphabet, has it. Do not buy anything unless you heartily like it, after more than one good look at it. And try to learn the principles which govern good taste.

So, again, in the matter of dress, flimsy and showy materials are bought, especially for children's clothing, where plainer and more substantial articles would serve their turn far better. There is actually no market in America for the stout, much-enduring fabrics, which are worn in the old country by all children except those of the very wealthy. This arises very largely from the silly sort of competition which goes on in society. Mrs. D., the wife of a workman, is bent on seeing her children as well dressed as those of Mrs. C., the wife of the foreman, who lives in the same street. Mrs. C. is keeping up with Mrs. B. the corner grocer, whose children go to the same school, or Sunday school. Mrs. B. is competing with Mrs. A., the wife of the wholesale grocer, who attends the same church. And so the woman whose income is fifteen dollars a week is dressing her children, as nearly as possible, in the style adopted by one who spends twice that sum every day.

Again, in the purchase of food, the most expensive articles seem to be almost the only thing desired by anybody. When our meat-dealers were asked why it paid to send cattle over to England and sell them there at exactly the price asked for beef at home, they said: "In England, a great many parts, such as the neck pieces, can be sold at fair prices, while in America they are as good as wasted." Our Philadelphia

butchers say they sell the workingman just the same pieces, and of the same quality, as to his employer. If there be any difference, it is that the employer will, at times, buy the cheaper pieces, as he can do so without forfeiting self-respect or social standing. The dealers in fruits and vegetables tell the same story. It is among their poorer customers that they find a market for the early, half ripe articles, which sell at four or five times the price that they would bring when ripe.

Then, again, the working class have to pay higher prices because they purchase small quantities. They run to the retail store for a pound or even an ounce of tea, or for a few pounds of flour, while the rich buy, at wholesale rates, tea by the box, and flour by the barrel. The profits of the retailer are fair enough. He takes pay for the trouble and expense he is at in weighing out and putting up his goods in small parcels. But the workingman cannot afford to pay for such services. He, too, should buy at wholesale. Or, if he have not the money for a large purchase, he might manage it by clubbing purses with his neighbors, and thus cheapen a large number of necessary articles.

Most people wonder "where the money does go to," for few have any distinct notion of how it is spent. Nothing so helps a man to wise economy as the practice of keeping accounts. Enter in a blank book, every evening, faithfully and exactly, every cent that you and the members of your family have spent during the day. Insist that they shall keep for you a daily record, say on a slate. Do not admit any ambiguous items, such as "sundries." Make a mark to designate every unnecessary outlay, and exercise your best wisdom in determining what are such. Find at the end of the week, or of the month, to what these needless expenses amount in comparison with the whole. If the result be that you are not helped to live more cheaply, you either need no amendment or you are past all help.

There are two great sources of useless expense, with regard to which the workingman should be upon his guard, and the first is *spirituous liquors*.

In the first place, they do the workman harm, and make him less able for his work. It is not necessary to believe, with the advocates of Total Abstinence, that "alcohol is always a poison and never a food," that "its use is a sin," "that under no circumstances can its use be a benefit," and that "the man who begins to drink, begins to be drunk." Neither science nor common sense will sustain such statements. On the contrary, wine and the like have their rightful use, which should never be confounded with their abuse. When they are taken in moderation and in the social circle, they serve to heighten the joys of those occasions of special gladness, of which we can never make too much. Birthdays, weddings, family and national festivals are the times for which they should be reserved, and those who abstain from them at other times, will not be likely to use them in excess. An English physician says: "Wines, prudence will reserve for festive purposes and occasions. The wise man who wishes to enjoy life, will make them always exceptional. For as an idle person has no holidays, so perpetual feasters lose all the pleasures of variety."

But an overdose of alcohol is a narcotic, and an overdose of that amount, be it a spoonful or a quart, which flushes the face, taints the breath, and confuses the thoughts. There are but two cases, in which alcohol in any quantity is of use to the workingman. The one is where digestion is so impaired that he cannot use food enough to keep up his strength; the other, when he has been "tired to death" by an extra amount of overwork. A healthy man, in ordinary circumstances, needs no alcohol; he is the worse for using it. If he takes it during working hours, he feels, for a while, equal to anything; but as the effect wears off, he loses a good deal more energy

than he had gained, and becomes far more tired than if he had let beer or whiskey alone. If he take it after hours, except in the single case which has been mentioned, it makes him less fit for sound and refreshing sleep. The next day finds him tired before his work has begun. Hence the need of "a hair of the dog that bit you,"—of more whiskey in the morning, to repair the loss of energy and tone caused by what had been taken over night.

All the world knows that a workman who uses such drinks could do more, and do it more easily, if he were to avoid them. Young Benjamin Franklin, long before Temperance Societies were thought of, showed his comrades in the London printing office, that, though he drank nothing but water, he could work harder and lift heavier weights than they who drank beer and spirits. Thousands of years earlier, Daniel and his friends showed that they were all the better in health for letting wine alone. The Turkish soldiers could not sustain the hardships of their present campaign, and keep their health as they have done, were it not that their religion makes them teetotallers. The Russians also drink nothing stronger than tea, while in the army. The last British Expedition to hunt up the North Pole suffered more from the cold, because rum, and not tea or coffee, was served out to the men. And such facts might be quoted by the thousand.

Drinking, therefore, is a mischief to the workingman, even when he does not carry it on to drunkenness. It keeps him below his powers, and makes him worth less to any one who desires his services. On the whole, it helps to keep wages down, by diminishing men's capacity for work.

As for drunkenness, it is a thing which everybody knows and feels the wrong of. It is bad for soul and for body, bad for purse and pocket, bad for a man's self and for all

who are cursed with belonging to him. It is a vice which was formerly much more common than it is now. Fifty or sixty years ago, rum or brandy were upon every table, and the few who made a practice of going to bed sober, were thought milksops. "Drunk as a lord" was a common saying, which still tells us how the richest classes in the old world behaved. The change for the better has been greatest in those classes. It is now disgraceful for a rich man to be drunk, for society frowns upon every such excess. Drunkenness is also far less common among the working classes than it used to be, but it is still more frequent with them than with any other class. And this is partly because there is not among them the vigorous public opinion on this subject, that there is among the wealthier. The drunkard's comrades do not frown upon the offence as they ought, and they do not give him as much help as they might, to keep clear of temptation.

One sort of help would be the better regulation of the liquor traffic. There should not be miles and miles of liquor stores in our City. They take up more than half the street corners, in some districts, and their keepers only eke out a living through selling bad liquors and by tempting men to folly. "It's the fool's pence," as one of their owners said, which keep up such places. Attempts to suppress the traffic are doubtful in principle, and they have not succeeded in practice. But it would be both right and practicable to put it under stricter rules, and to insist on rules being kept. This would be dealing with the liquor business just as we do with any other business, by whose mismanagement the public may be injured. *First*, the charge for a license should be much higher than it is, say five hundred or a thousand dollars a year. This would make those who paid for a license prompt in putting down those who did not. Our police recently found two hundred and twenty such places in this city.

Secondly, the number of public houses to be licensed in each ward should be fixed with some regard to the population of the ward, and, of course, it should be far smaller than it is. We do not need one such place, where we now have five or six. In England, they find that the more public houses there are in a town, the greater the number of drunkards in proportion to the population. *Thirdly*, the offence of keeping adulterated liquors, or of selling liquors to a drunken man, or at times not allowed by the law, should be strictly punished and the license forfeited. And no person who has been convicted of that or of any other offence, should be allowed either to keep such a house or to be employed by its keeper. *Fourthly*, the business should be put under the supervision of State Inspectors, instead of leaving the enforcement of the law to private persons.

All this might be done without interfering with personal liberty. But if things are allowed to go on as they are, the blame rests chiefly with those who suffer most from this state of things. The working classes are strong enough to secure any change of the liquor law they desire.*

* The best system of regulation is that which was devised in the town of Göteborg, in Southern Sweden, a place of about sixty-thousand inhabitants. Till very recently, every Swedish family distilled potato brandy for its own use, but this has been forbidden, so that public distilleries and public houses have begun to carry on the liquor traffic. As drunkenness was spreading very fast among the Swedish people, a number of public spirited Swedes in that town formed an Association to check it. They persuaded the Government to fix the number of public houses to be allowed in each ward or parish, and to put up at auction the privilege of keeping them. The Association bought this privilege, and opened the houses themselves. They provided pleasant rooms, with books and newspapers, to which the workman might take his family, and they furnished tea and coffee, as well as liquors. They forbade their salesmen to tempt any one to drink, and they required that those who had had enough should have no more.

The chief obstacle among us to such a plan, is the fact that nearly all those who are alive to the mischiefs of drunkenness, are, on principle, Total Abstiners, and, therefore, could not conscientiously associate for any such purpose. But it will probably soon be tried in Great Britain. Several Scotch burghs, and the City of Birmingham, have asked Parliament's leave to introduce it.

Besides doing him a mischief, spirituous liquors empty the workingman's pocket. That most of the drinking places are supported by the custom of those who have little to spend, may be seen by a look at them. They are shabby, squalid places, generally badly lighted and often dirty. They are commonest in the poorer parts of every city. Where you find that nearly every corner has its tavern, you do not find the homes of those who are getting on in the world. "The fool's pence" which keep them going are the workingman's pence. And they are the pence chiefly of those of the laboring class who make no effort to save money. Taverns do not abound in the districts which are filled with rows of two-story houses, put up with the help of the Building Associations. They are more plenty in the neighborhood of tenement houses and close alleys, whose people live from hand to mouth, and do nothing towards having houses of their own over their heads.

This, the vastest tax upon the working classes—a tax imposed by themselves. To what it amounts is not easy to say, for the Government does not report it. It seems to be somewhere between two hundred and three hundred millions a year for the whole country, and most of it taken out of wages. That means two or three hundred millions subtracted from the wealth and comfort of the people, and spent, for the most part, to no good purpose. Much of it, indeed, is spent to such bad purpose, that it would have been better to burn the money up. "Do you see anything the matter with my throat?" a young Virginian asked a stranger who had treated him. "No, there is nothing the matter with your throat." "Well, there ought to be, for a large plantation and two hundred negroes have gone down that throat, Sir, in the shape of liquors." We have plenty of such throats among us. They have swallowed what might have become homes to shelter their owner and his children, what might have been

food, education and a fair start in life to those who must make their start with little or nothing but the inheritance of a bad example. How many bricks is the workingman pulling out of the house that might be his, as he stands before the counter, glass in hand, bartering the comfort, the competence, the safety of the future, for the mere animal enjoyment, the fool's paradise, of the hour?

If the working classes saw their way to adding two hundred millions, or even one hundred millions, a year to their wages by a strike, it would be hard to keep them back from it. They would undergo privations and sufferings, for weeks and even months, of their own free will. But it is within their power to make that addition to their income without striking, without an extra hour of idleness and voluntary hunger, without a struggle of any sort, except the struggle of each man with his baser self, the animal inside him. And upon the way in which a man fights that fight, depends his right to the very name of man.

The second great source of useless expense is *tobacco*.

This is the age of smokers. We can all remember when perhaps a majority of our people used no tobacco. No one had the insolence to smoke on the streets, or in public conveyances, where he must fill the eyes and the noses of those who have no relish for such perfumes. But all that is changed since the war, and since we found our national hero in its greatest general and our greatest smoker. His example seems to have affected even those who detest every other sort of "Grantism," and smoking has become the fashion. This is a gain in so far as it has rid us of the filthier uses of the weed, such as chewing. But it is no gain in any other sense. It is no gain that cigar stores multiply so fast, and so many men, especially young men, are busy in them. It is of no good

omen for the health and energy of the rising generation, that children of six or eight years strut about with cheap segars, and our school boys are learned in the merits of "brands."

In one respect, tobacco is even worse than alcohol. It blights the soil on which it is grown, as does no other crop. Other plants may be grown without injury to the land, if a fair amount of manuring is used, and if the crops are changed every year or so. But tobacco will grow only in the very richest soil, and after a time it wears it out beyond the reach of all ordinary remedies. There is nothing to do with an old tobacco plantation, except to let it lie waste while nature covers it with weeds and pine woods, or whatever else she chooses to have grown on it. The pineries of Eastern Virginia, among which so many of the movements and battles of the war took place, were old tobacco fields, dead and done for because their fertility had been blown from the pipes of past generations of smokers. And every smoker has the satisfaction of knowing that he is helping to blight some fair portion of the earth, perhaps some fertile field of the land he professes to love.

That tobacco is as bad for health as liquor is, nobody will say. But it does great injury to persons who use it too freely or too long. There are mere lads in this city, who have had to give up their studies and put themselves under the doctor's care, because their nerves have been so shattered by smoking that they could not go on. We have great lawyers who are so tobaccoized that they cannot put on their own hats, and doctors of divinity whose staggering efforts to raise an umbrella in the face of a moderate wind, would be amusing if they were not so painful. These are the people who smoke morning, noon and night.

But even those who keep from going so far, are none the better for smoking. For one thing, the habit helps a man to

become an idler. Smoking is doing something. It puts in the time. Those who might take to doing something useful in their leisure hours, are kept from feeling the need of it by having a pipe or cigar in their mouths. They plead that it soothes their nerves and rids them of their worries. Is it a good thing to be rid of worries in any other way than by facing and mastering them? Does not the smoker get rid of his by relaxing the tension and lowering the tone of the nervous system, and thus slightly dulling sense and thought? If the sharp corners of his troubles no longer fret him as they did, is it not because he no longer presents a firm mental surface to their contact? Turn men into sponges, and no blow will hurt them. Make the mind flabby, blur its perceptions, and troubles will hit it like a blow on a sponge. But you will have gained a loss. Mental energy, moving force, practical tact, clear-headedness will have suffered. And certainly the nations and races who have smoked most and longest have not been notable for those qualities.

But whether tobacco is bad for a man or not, it certainly helps to empty the workingman's pockets. He, of all men, cannot afford to smoke. It costs too much in the course of a year. And, for his sake, it is to be hoped that this wretched fashion will go out, as did that of drunkenness. For a fashion it is, and nothing more. Almost every man who ever acquired it went through an initiation of sickness and disgust, which only the influence of fashion would have led him to undergo. Whatever be the enjoyment in the later stages, there is nothing of the sort to console the victim in the beginning of his slavery. And, besides, this fashion changes its style like others. A hundred years ago there were more women than men who smoked, at least among the farmer and laboring classes. Some of us still remember seeing old women whom we can never think of without seeing the pipe in their mouths. But it ceased be the thing for women, proba—

bly because the younger ones found that the men did not like it, and the practice is now confined to Cuba and Spain. And now it is the women's turn to put it down among the men. If they do, they will lift another heavy tax from the shoulders of the working classes. They will stop another leak through which their possible savings vanish. They will put an end to a weak and selfish indulgence, and help the men to confer solid and lasting benefits on themselves and on others.

It is impossible not to see that workingmen cling longer to the lower sort of enjoyments, because they have none of a higher sort with which to replace them. And, therefore, it is of little use to ask them to give up those things which relieve the monotony of life, and give it some color of variety, unless something better is proposed instead. This brings us to speak of the duty of *self-culture*.

Culture is that which widens a man's outlook, and gives him an intelligent interest in things which do not belong to his daily business, and his bread getting. Religious culture, for instance, is one of the great objects for which the Churches exist. They try to get people interested in the world which lies within them, the world of heart and conscience and feeling; and also in the world which lies beyond this, and from which this world derives impulses to right and pure living. And, as a matter of course, the man who enters into these questions with a real interest, is so pre-occupied that he will be in less need of any coarse and sensual indulgences to fill up his life. When a man who professes to be thus interested, shows, by his acts, that his chief concern is about the things of this outward and present world, we call him a hypocrite, and by that we mean that his pretended interest was a sham and a lie.

So it is with literary, or scientific, or artistic, or musical culture. Each holds the key, as it were, to another world,

and the man who gets that key and uses it aright, has things to think about which not only occupy but expand his mind. He has a source of lasting enjoyment to himself. He can spend his leisure both innocently and pleasantly. His new world is so large that it is never exhausted by his studies of its treasures. And if he be wise, as well as well informed, his daily work, however different it may be from the studies of his leisure hours, becomes not distasteful to him, but the very reverse. He manages somehow to get light from the one to shine upon the other; he works more pleasantly, patiently and heartily at that by which he earns his bread.

Heretofore, the keys of these worlds of study and delight have been chiefly in the hands of the rich, and of the few who devoted their lives to learning. Once it was necessarily so. But since the workingman Guttenberg invented movable types and the best books are to be had cheaply, there is no reason that it should continue so. And, to some extent, our working people *have* been stretching out their hands to get hold of those keys, and perhaps nowhere more so than in America. This is seen in the intelligence of our working classes, which enables many things to be done in a style not possible in the old world. In some cases, Europeans have taken our machinery and adopted our methods, but could not get our results because they could not get our workmen's intelligent skill along with them. The Centennial Exhibition showed all the world that the American workman had got into the front rank in many departments of industry, and did not mean to be left behind in any. Partly this is due, as our visitors said, to the general diffusion of school education, and the number of popular newspapers. Partly, let us hope, to the continuance of habits formed at school, and the study of more solid and instructive literature than our newspapers.

But, after all, we have made only a beginning. The keys are still mostly in the hands of the rich, and of those who live

by books. Our common notion of education is that it is teaching school children and lads, whereas no man should cease his education as long as he lives. And it is thought by many good people, who wish well to the working classes, that popular compendiums, easy text books, and well watered abstracts are the sort of mental food that best suits the laborer's intellect.

On the other hand, there is a sort of literature which does far more harm than good to any body who wastes his time on it, and which comes into successful competition with these popular and simplified books about science and the like. It is a literature debasing to the mind, and defiling to the heart, but it serves the purpose for which it was meant. It gives diversion, excitement, and taxes no power of thought. To buy it, is a waste of money ; to read it, a waste of time, if not a paralysis of the intellect. And this class of books and papers represent a positive mischief which is paid for chiefly out of the wages of labor. They are worse than whiskey, rum or tobacco ; they destroy character, impoverish hearts, and unfit men for the duties of life.

To meet these evils, the workman must be brought to understand that the very highest culture is his birth-right as the citizen of a free republic. This is a market in which the best is also the cheapest, and he is a fool if he puts up with anything less or lower than the best. Let him make up his mind to master and understand the deepest thinking upon the subject which interests him, and to be content with nothing short of it. There is no just reason why he should not. He has not, indeed, had the advantages of special training which the scholar has enjoyed, but any scholar who has looked back upon the course of his own life, knows that he has got most advantage and profit out of studies which he undertook with no preparation and no assistance but mother-wit. To understand many of the greatest works, his chief difficulty was in

divesting himself of the opinions and notions of his class, and adopting the humble position of confessed ignorance. And he has found most of the very great works to be written, like Shakespeare and Wordsworth, for the human mind, not for the scholar. He can indeed give the workman valuable aid, if by any device the two can be brought into friendly and helpful contact. The English have managed this to some extent. Their workingmen's colleges, in one of which Tom Hughes is president, do manage to secure many of the finest and best trained men in England to teach the workmen whatever they know best themselves.

As regards *literary* culture, what is to prevent the patient and intelligent workman from fully appreciating the great poets and historians, novelists and essayists of his own literature, or of any other? It is the very greatness of the really great writers that they address no set or class of men, but men simply. We are obliged to get rid of what is narrow and belongs to our class only, if we would understand them aright. The field of *philosophy* or of *philology* is equally open to such students. For the thoughts of the heart and the words of the mouth are as much the business of the workman as the student; they touch him just as closely.

And as specialists in *physical science*, men of this class have rendered most excellent service, especially in natural history. For many of them, *mathematics* possesses a charm which surpasses anything that the merely theoretical student has ever experienced, because that study casts light upon their own daily work.

It might be thought that *art* and *music* were especially closed to our workingmen, whatever those of other lands might make of them. But artistic culture, in the truest sense, is now confessedly the most crying want of our working classes. Those who spoke most highly of our exhibits at the Centennial, pointed out our great deficiencies on this point, and proph-

esied that we would not long be content with deficiency. If our work in pottery, in textiles, in wood and metals is to compete with that of the old world, our workmen must have that training of eye and hand, which has been so recently and so rapidly acquired by their transatlantic brethren. And not only the producer must be trained to make what has artistic merit, what is truly beautiful, but the masses of the population must share in the same training, so that they shall know and expect the beautiful in every sort of work. They need it, as we have seen, that they may no longer waste money in ugliness, when they make purchases to adorn their own homes.

Music, also, ought to be a favorite pursuit with our workmen. It is so with those of them who are of German origin. Their Männerchor and other societies are the source of much innocent enjoyment and true culture to their numerous members. And of late years, in England especially, through the efforts of John Hullah, thousands upon thousands of artisans and mechanics have learned not only to sing by note, but to appreciate for themselves the highest and most classic music. Choral associations have been organized all over the island, to the manifest growth of temperance, cleanliness and moral and physical health among their members. And why not? Three centuries ago, the English were, perhaps, the most musical people in the world. Musical instruments hung in the barber shops for the use of customers waiting for their turn. Everybody could sing and did sing; it was mentioned among the merits of boys offered as apprentices, that they had fine, well-trained voices. A stranger who claimed to belong to a craft or trade, must make good his claim by his knowledge of its songs, and his skill on the instruments which its members cultivated. Such were our forefathers; such, also, might a more careful and general attention to music make us. And the gain would be great, for we would have better moral and

mental health, more good-fellowship with each other, and a source of hearty delight in the study of the works of great geniuses.

Of still greater importance to the workingman is *political culture*. The position of the American workman as a voter, makes it his duty to get all the knowledge he can upon the subject of politics. From the newspapers much is to be learnt, but not everything. We need to know a good deal before we can read even the newspapers aright, and correct their hasty and one-sided judgments of events and of men.

But the workingman, and not he only, is, as a rule, satisfied with whatever teaching comes to hand. He joins a party, perhaps, because his father belonged to it; perhaps, because he sees something in it which he really and justly admires. And from that day he *belongs to* that party. It owns him; he is part of the raw material of its operations. He has no broad views of the relations of parties to each other, and their necessity. He is not awake to the need of reforming the abuses which creep into all political methods and systems. Each new election means to him little more than a new decision of the question whether Democrats or Republicans are the stronger. The very utmost he can be got to do is to scratch the ticket, when some candidate has such a bad reputation that his loyalty to the party cannot save him.

But every voter should know the history of his country and especially of its constitution, and the circumstances in which its parties took their rise. He should form an intelligent judgment of the great questions of finance, of political policy, and so forth, which the elections bring before the people, and his vote should express his judgment of these. He should belong to no party, though he may act, for the time, with the one he thinks nearest right; he should belong only to his country and to the truth. He should be proud to take his

place among that middle class of intelligent and independent voters whose votes decide almost every election, and are given with strict reference to the merits, first of the measures and then of the men who have been brought forward.

Now this calls for thought, attention and study on the part of the voter. It takes him from the newspapers to the best books on politics and government, on political economy and finance. It requires of him to become a man of public spirit, and to give his mind to the political interests of the land in which he dwells.

All this is setting up a very high standard for the workingman, but it is an insult to his manhood to propose any lower. There is no earthly reason why he should be the intellectual or moral inferior of the best men in any other class.

In the words, somewhat altered, of one who has devoted much of his life to the interests of the working class: "I pray you, with all earnestness, to prove and to know within your hearts, that all good things are possible for those who believe in their possibility, and who determine that, for their part, they will make every day's work contribute to them. Let every dawn of morning be to you as the beginning of life, and every setting sun be as its close. Then let every one of these short lives leave its sure record of something done, some strength gained. So, from day to day, and from strength to strength, you shall build up, indeed, by act and thought and just will, a social edifice, of which it shall not be said: 'See what manner of stones are here,' but 'what manner of men.'"



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